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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Wednesday, August 16, 1939.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "FILLING THE AUGUST MARKET BASKET." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S.D.A. and the Consumers' Counsel, A.A.A.

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When you go to market this month to buy fresh foods for the family, remember green corn and cantaloups. Now is the season to indulge in both these favorites for August is the month when they are most plentiful.

Other fresh fruits and vegetables that reach their peak this month are: lima beans, avocados (formerly called alligator pears), and blueberries, huckleberries, figs and nectarines. This month, too, peach supplies will be largest, but that's unusual. Ordinarily the top of the peach season comes in July. It comes in August this year because the late crop of peaches is so much larger than the early crop. August also opens a 3-month period for Persian melons. But it closes the season for cherries, blackberries and raspberries.

The markets are expecting more cantaloups this month than they had a year ago, because both Indiana and Maryland report larger crops this year. Indiana and Maryland are the big cantaloup-producing centers in August. California will continue to ship honeydew melons to market until Christmas and honeyball melons until the end of September. Cantaloup season ends in October. If you are fond of cantaloups, better make the most of them this month and next.

Most fruits are on the increase this month. More apples and pears are coming to market, and more plums and grapes, as well as more peaches. This is the month, too, when California valencia oranges appear to be at their peak. So now is the time to put fruit on your menu. Its plentiful and prices should be reasonable.

The big vegetable news this month is green corn. It's the buy of the month. New Jersey, one of the big fresh corn States at this season, expects a corn crop much larger than last year's.

Green corn is a 100-percent American vegetable. The early settlers learned about it from the Indians. So every American housewife should know how to choose good corn on the cob at the market. But just the same, a few people here and there don't know that a good ear of corn has a fresh green husk and a cob well-filled with bright, plump, milky kernels that feel rather firm when you press them. Dry, yellowed or brownish husks indicate corn that is old or has been damaged. Most people know, too, that corn is one of the vegetables that must be fresh to be good. It loses sweetness, flavor and tenderness if it stands. Leave corn all day waiting in a warm kitchen or in a warm grocery store and it just won't taste like the same vegetable. Corn at its best goes directly from the garden to the cooking kettle. At least, be sure it's freshly picked. And if you have to keep it a few hours before cooking, keep it in the refrigerator or some cold place and leave it in the husk to the last minute.

So much for tips on fruits and vegetables. Now for some news about meat. Pork is the big meat news. A great deal more pork is expected this fall and winter. As soon as hog marketing starts in October, pork supplies will be large and prices should be reasonable. In fact, during the coming year, beginning with October first, we should have as much pork in this country as we used to have before the recent drought years.

As for beef and lamb, more of both these meats are on the market this month than last. For the rest of the year, there will be about the same amount of beef for sale. There will be more better-grade beef than we had last year but smaller supplies of lower-grade beef. But from now on for the rest of this year, there will be smaller supplies of lamb.

As for poultry and eggs, supplies of both will continue larger than last year.

More poultry will be coming on the market each month from now on through Christmas, but fewer eggs will be coming each month.

When you're buying poultry, you'll notice that chickens under a year old will be most plentiful on the market during the next six months. The poultry calendar runs like this: July and August are the big months for broilers. From August to October fryers come to market. And then from October to January roasters are the buy.

Before I finish these tips for food-shoppers, let me remind you of good buys as indicated by the list of surplus agricultural commodities. Pears and fresh tomatoes are recent additions to that list. Remember them. The list includes: pears and fresh tomatoes, fresh peaches, cabbage, onions, butter, rice, cornmeal, dry beans, dried prunes, wheat and graham flour.

That's all the food news for today. More in a couple of weeks.

But wait a minute--just a minute while I tell you about a new leaflet on cooking poultry. With all these chickens coming to market, you'll want to know good ways to cook them. Write to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. and ask for "Poultry Cooking." As long as the supply lasts, this new leaflet is free.

